

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EPA-04 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 L-03

H-02 DOTE-00 HEW-06 STR-04 INT-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 EA-09 FRB-01 INR-07 IO-11

NEA-10 NSAE-00 OPIC-06 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01

OMB-01 DODE-00 AGR-10 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 NSF-02

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APPROVED BY OES/ENP/EN:LGRANT

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EPA:JTHOMPSON (SUBS)

EUR/RPE:GWOLFE

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TO USMISSION OECD PARIS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SENV, OECD

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE - ISSUE OF PCBS

1. AS MISSION AWARE, THE ISSUE OF PCBS (POLYCHLORINATED BIPHENYLS) HAS BECOME ACTIVE ONCE MORE IN THE U.S., AS A RESULT OF NEW EVIDENCE CONCERNING BOTH THEIR HEALTH EFFECTS AND THE EXTENT OF THEIR SPREAD IN THE ENVIRONMENT. MOST RECENTLY, EPA ADMINISTRATOR TRAIN WENT PUBLIC WITH A PRESS STATEMENT, SUPPORTED BY A LENGTHY BACKGROUNDER. HE ADDRESSED BOTH THE THREAT OF PCBS IN THE U.S., AND MEASURES THE EPA PLANNED TO TAKE TO BRING ABOUT THE MOST UNCLASSIFIED

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EFFECTIVE CONTROL POSSIBLE--IN THE ABSENCE OF TOXIC

SUBSTANCES LEGISLATION--OVER THEIR DISCHARGE INTO THE ENVIRONMENT. (COPIES OF THE EPA MATERIALS HAVE BEEN POUCHED TO KRAMISH.)

2. WE HAVE GIVEN SERIOUS THOUGHT TO CALLING FOR A SECOND "PCB CONSULTATION" IN THE OECD TO ATTEMPT FORCE MEMBERS TO CONSIDER WHY AND WHERE THE FEBRUARY 1973 COUNCIL DECISION IS NOT BEING EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENTED AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT. (IT CLEARLY IS NOT BEING IMPLEMENTED EFFECTIVELY--BOTH WITHIN SOME COUNTRIES (INCLUDING THE U.S.), AND IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE.) HOWEVER, ANY CONSULTATION PRESUMABLY COULD NOT BE ARRANGED BEFORE MARCH

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING. FURTHERMORE, WE UNDERSTAND (BASED ON A LOWELL MILLER-MARIA IDMAN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION) THAT NOT ONLY WILL PCB MATTER BE ON AGENDA FOR THE CUSTOMARY "REVIEW" OF THE ANNUAL REPORT, BUT THERE ALSO MAY BE SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS RAISED UNDER THAT AGENDA ITEM.

3. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE AT THIS JUNCTURE. A COMPLETELY PRO FORMA CONSIDERATION OF PCB ISSUE IN MARCH WOULD BE QUITE INADEQUATE--BOTH IN VIEW OF THE FAILING ON THE PART OF MANY MEMBERS TO COMPLY WITH VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COUNCIL DECISION, AND IN VIEW OF INCREASING SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROBLEM IN GENERAL.

4. EVEN IF ADEQUATE LEAD TIME IS GIVEN MEMBERS BY INCLUSION OF APPROPRIATE NOTES AND QUESTIONS IN THE PRE-MEETING DOCUMENTATION, WE CANNOT REALISTICALLY HOPE THAT DEFINITIVE ANSWERS TO ALL ISSUES WILL BE PROVIDED DURING THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE'S SESSION. TIME CONSTRAINTS ALONE WOULD PRECLUDE THIS. HOWEVER, THERE WILL AT LEAST HAVE TO BE AN INITIAL AIRING OF SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF THE ISSUE AND SOME GOOD GROUNDWORK LAID FOR SUBSEQUENT ACTION, BE IT IN THE CHEMICALS GROUP OR IN A FORMAL CONSULTATION, WHICH MAY WELL BE THE APPROPRIATE FOLLOW-UP.

5. AMONG THE QUESTIONS WHICH WE BELIEVE MEMBERS SHOULD BE ASKED TO CONSIDER WOULD BE: WHY IS THE INFORMATION UNCLASSIFIED

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SUBMITTED TO THE CHEMICALS GROUP BY MANY MEMBERS LACKING OR INCOMPLETE? WHY HAVE SOME COUNTRIES INCREASED THEIR PRODUCTION OF PCBS? WHAT ARE COUNTRIES ACTUALLY DOING TO CONTROL IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF PCBS?

6. MISSION IS REQUESTED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH IDMAN OF SECRETARIAT. THE GOAL IS TO BE SURE THAT APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS WILL IN FACT BE INCLUDED IN THE

PRE-MEETING DOCUMENTATION. MISSION MAY WISH PURSUE THE
MATTER WITH RODERICK IF IT APPEARS APPROPRIATE IN ORDER
TO EMPHASIZE OUR POSITION.

7. PLEASE ADVISE RE RESULTS YOUR APPROACHES TO
SECRETARIAT. SISCO

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